

# The Common Cause

## OF HUMANITY.

The Organ of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

LAW-ABIDING.]

*Societies and Branches in the Union 602.*

[NON-PARTY.]

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### Notes and News.

#### Women in All Departments.

The Board of Trade has now issued a circular to all Government departments offering women substitutes to replace civil servants who desire to join the Colours. "This circular," says the *Daily Telegraph*, "for the first time throws open every Government office to women and demolishes, if only temporarily, the barrier of sex." The Board of Trade is prepared to supply women clerks through the medium of the Civil Service Commission from their list of over 40,000 women who have now registered for war service. The National Union is proceeding with its arrangements for the work of registering, and a statement in the *Globe* that "the excellent war relief work of the National Union is rudely interrupted" owing to resignations from the Executive Committee, is, of course, incorrect and has been contradicted from Headquarters.

#### Soldiers' and Sailors' Dependants.

The Select Committee has now issued important proposals which are briefly as follows:—A Statutory Committee of the Royal Patriotic Corporation shall be the body appointed to deal with questions of pensions and grants. It shall consist of twenty-five members, of whom twelve shall be appointed by the Crown, two to represent labour, and not less than two to be women. Of the remaining thirteen members, three represent respectively the Treasury, Admiralty, and the War Office; six are appointed by the Patriotic Corporation (not less than two being women), two by the National Relief Fund, and two by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association. Local Advisory bodies are to be created and "provision should be made in every scheme for the appointment of not less than two women."

#### Disappointing Proposals.

We need hardly say that such proposals are most disappointing. Matters of vital import to the dependants of soldiers and sailors are under consideration. These dependants are almost exclusively women and children of the working classes, and yet women and labour are alike represented in the slenderest proportion. Out of a body of twenty-five members at least two only must be women, and these women are not to be chosen by their own organisations but to be selected by the Government, as is also the case in regard to labour members. We earnestly hope that these proposals will be reconsidered.

#### Anti-Suffrage Recommendations.

Mrs. Humphry Ward's Joint Advisory Committee have made certain recommendations on the Reports of the Select Committee and forwarded them to that body in view of discussion in the House on the completed report; "but it now appears," Mrs. Ward complains, "that none of the important points dealt with in our recommendations are at the present moment to be submitted to the House of Commons at all." This is, perhaps, a hint to Anti-suffragists to leave political questions to the sex which Nature ordained to deal with them!

#### "The Only Check."

The price of food continues to rise rapidly and a further increase is expected. In some places bread is 9d. the 4 lb. loaf and milk 4½d. per quart. This is a question of paramount importance to the working woman and it would seem that women alone are grappling with it to any purpose. "The economical methods of the thrifty housewife," says *The Times* of April 24th, "is the only check in the rise in prices. Government action in the regulation of prices, so far as it has gone, has had no effect whatever. The retail dealers have discovered that since the outbreak of war, the housewife is given to wandering about her neighbourhood seeking the shops where she can make her allowance go furthest and so they mark their prices only as high as they dare to, under her measuring eye."

#### The War Bonus.

From the problem of high prices issues the vexed question of the war bonus. We have reported discontent, which is still growing, among Post Office workers owing to the Government's refusal to grant a bonus, on the grounds that the higher cost of living must be borne equally by all classes. The miners' agitation gives rise to yet greater anxiety, and is centred for the moment on the demand for a National Conference. The question as to whether a settlement shall be reached on National lines or by each district independently is the main point at issue, and the miners have strong reasons for preferring the former course. The coalowners have refused to summon a National Conference of owners and men and the miners have made an appeal to Mr. Asquith to do so. As we go to press the Prime Minister is "not yet in a position" to give the definite reply for which the miners have been anxiously waiting.

#### Suffrage for Denmark.

The National Union has cabled congratulations to Denmark. The long struggle between the two Danish Houses of Parliament is now at an end and the issue is wholly favourable to democracy and to Women's Suffrage. The Danish Parliament on April 23rd adopted the new Constitution by which all sex privileges are abolished, and everybody is given the right to vote. This change will operate gradually. The age minimum for voters is twenty-five. According to Reuter, women may also become members of the Rigsdag, and the qualifications hitherto necessary for election to the Landsting are no longer needed. The new Constitution will have to be passed once more by the new Rigsdag to be elected next month. It is hoped that the King will definitely sign the new Constitution on June 5th, the anniversary of the establishment of the first Constitution in 1849.

## In Parliament.

April 21st.

## WAR SERVICE FOR WOMEN.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. J. M. Robertson), in reply to questions from Mr. HOGGE with regard to the appeal to women to register at Labour Exchanges, stated that at the Census of 1911 there were 15,650,778 women between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five. At the present time probably about 5,500,000 of these were occupied. The nature of any training given under the Board of Trade's new scheme, and the arrangements for giving it, would depend in each case upon the nature of the work for which employers desire to engage the women. In the case of agriculture, where a certain number of women are already being trained, the training is being given at agricultural colleges, and maintenance grants have been provided by the Development Commission. A number of resolutions had been received from women's organisations offering co-operation with the Board of Trade in connection with the scheme of war service for women. The President of the Board hoped to make full use of these offers, which he valued very much.

## PROMOTION OF TEMPERANCE.

MR. J. M. HENDERSON (Aberdeenshire West, L.), in the course of the debate on the Supply of War Munitions, suggested that a good deal of the trouble complained of, with regard to excessive drinking, was due to there being no means for the workers—who were working hard and working late—to refresh themselves without going out of the factory. If the factories and engine shops were supplied with tea, coffee, and refreshments, other than spirits—including a certain amount of beer if necessary—so that the men did not have to go outside the bounds of the shop, he thought it would be a very good thing.

April 22nd.

## DISABLED SOLDIERS.

MR. WALTER LONG (Strand, U.), during the debate on the Army Estimates, pleaded that help should be organised for disabled soldiers discharged from hospital. He submitted that there should be proper provision made for these men, until they had had an opportunity to recover their strength and fit themselves for again starting life under new conditions.

## SOLDIERS' DEPENDANTS.

MR. W. C. ANDERSON protested against the long delay which sometimes took place in making payments to soldiers' dependants, particularly in the case of mothers, and against the inquisitorial methods adopted by people who go round to find out the exact measure of a woman's dependence on her son. It seemed to him that these questions actually put a premium upon dishonesty, and that the woman who could tell the best story was likely to get the most money, whereas very often the strictly honest woman would come out of the bargain worst. In his opinion, almost as much money was spent on red tape methods as would allow of an extra shilling or two a week.

MR. ANEURIN WILLIAMS (N.-W. Durham, L.) pleaded the cause of the woman legally separated from her husband, who at present ceases to get the maintenance due to her under the separation order, if her husband enlists.

April 27th.

## BRITISH PRISONERS IN GERMANY.

In both Houses of Parliament the question of the treatment of British prisoners was discussed. Almost all the speakers deprecated any retaliation upon German prisoners in this country, but there was a strong feeling that those responsible for the inhumane treatment meted out to our officers and men should be brought to book after the war.

LORD KITCHENER stated that the constant testimony that had come in, not only from our own escaped prisoners but also from French, Russian, Belgian, and American sources, had brought it home to all who have sifted the evidence that the inhumanity displayed by the German authorities towards British prisoners especially was beyond doubt.

He thought it only right and fair to say that the German hospitals should be excepted from any charge of deliberate inhumanity. In the different detention camps the treatment varied considerably, but in most cases our men had suffered from want of food, and have received differential treatment as compared with their French and Russian comrades. Latterly, however, there seemed to be a slight improvement in some respect, due, perhaps to the visits of inspection which had been made from time to time through the American Ambassador. He concluded:—

"Germany has for many years posed before the civilised world as a great military nation. She has abundantly proved her military skill and courage, but surely it was also for her to set up a standard of military honour and conduct which would gain the respect, if not the friendship, of nations. Instead, she has stooped to acts which will surely stain indelibly her military history, and which would vie with the barbarous savagery of the Dervishes of the Sudan. I do not think there can be a soldier of any nationality, even amongst the Germans themselves, who is not heartily ashamed of the slur which has been thus brought upon the profession of arms."

In the House of Commons Mr. PRIMROSE, replying for Sir Edward Grey, explained what steps had been taken by the Government to obtain amelioration of the condition of our prisoners. Money had been allocated to the relief of prisoners and interned civilians, and the American Ambassador at Berlin had provided clothing in all the necessitous cases. Under the Hague Convention that should have been done by the German Government. A new scheme of inspection had now been inaugurated, under which the United States consular officials had been appointed to make an inspection; their reports would be published later on.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that there was no more painful aspect of this war than the treatment to which British prisoners had been subjected by our enemies.

## THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONGRESS.

In reply to a question by Mr. King, as to the reason which led to a refusal to allow about 100 women to attend the International Congress, Mr. McKENNA stated:—

"Upwards of 180 ladies applied for permits to leave for Holland with the object of attending the International Women's Congress at the Hague. The Foreign Office considered it very undesirable that so large a number from this country should attend a conference at a place so near the seat of war, and where it was known that agents of the enemy were making great efforts to obtain fragments of intelligence as to the movements of our ships and armies. I therefore refused the general grant of permits, but agreed, after consulting the Foreign Office, to issue a limited number of permits, not exceeding in all twenty-four, to ladies representing various organisations and sections of thought. The selection of the twenty-four did not in any way give any official character either to the conference itself or to the delegates. It is certainly not the policy of the Government to promote or encourage international congresses in present circumstances."

The ladies were warned to remember that they were in a country beset with spies, and to have no written matter of any kind that it would be dangerous to have read.

## WAR REGISTER (EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN).

MR. ROBERTSON (Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade) in reply to a question by Mr. Anderson, stated that up to the week ending April 16th, the number of women on the special war register was 47,000, of whom 8,089 had entered their names as willing to undertake armament work. The total number placed in employment so far was only 440, but the work of placing was only just beginning. In the department of armament labour, he understood that while the immediate demand for women was not in excess of the numbers that could be supplied in the ordinary way, some of the principal factories had informed the Board of Trade that during the next few months they would require additional numbers of women, amounting for those firms alone to over 13,000. In reply to a question by Mr. Arthur Henderson, calling attention to the resolutions passed at a special conference of trade unions and women's organisations, laying down the safeguards considered essential in any substitution of women's labour, Mr. Robertson stated that the whole question was receiving the careful consideration of the Board of Trade.

## MORE WORK FOR WOMEN.

The War Office is appealing for respirators for use by our troops at the Front as a protection against asphyxiating gases. The following are the two patterns recommended:—

I.—"A face piece (to cover mouth and nostrils) formed of an oblong pad of bleached absorbent cotton wool about 5½ in. by 3 in. by ¾ in., covered with three layers of bleached cotton gauze, and fitted with a band, to fit round the head and keep the pad in position, consisting of a piece of ½ in. cotton elastic 16 in. long attached to the narrow end of the face pad so as to form a loop with the pad."

II.—"A piece of double stockinette, 9½ in. long, 3½ in. wide in the centre, gradually diminishing in width to 2½ in. at each end, with a piece of thick plaited worsted about 5 in. long attached at each end, so as to form a loop to pass over the ear."

These respirators should be sent in packages of not less than one hundred to "Chief Ordnance Officer, Royal Army Clothing Department, Pimlico."

### WOMEN IN INVASION.

Mr. Balfour and two other members of the Committee of Imperial Defence gave an interview to Miss Courtney, Miss Marshall, and Miss Atkinson, in order to discuss the part women might play in case of invasion. Miss Courtney urged that the women of the present day would not be content to go to the cellars, but would wish to help in time of need. It was very desirable to make use of the energies of strong and able-bodied women, many of whom had considerable experience in organisation of various kinds. There would be much work for them to do in removing old people, invalids, and young children from the threatened areas, in providing food by the way, and lodgings for them inland. Women should be consulted about these things beforehand; everything should not be left to the last minute. In some districts Boy Scouts were entrusted with directions which they were to keep from their own mothers.

Miss Marshall pointed out that many mistakes might be avoided if women were consulted on the practical details. She instanced directions given for the removal of school-girls. If a large number of these, dressed in a more or less uniform manner, were seen marching away, they might easily be mistaken at a distance for some kind of military force, and consequently fired upon. Consultation with women teachers on such points as these was essential.

Miss Atkinson said that women did not wish to constitute themselves into a special body to do this work, but urged that they should be included in the general scheme. Were they members of the Local Emergency Committees this would be secured.

Mr. Balfour, in reply, said that it was recognised that women could in many matters render valuable service to the Local Emergency Committees. It had been suggested to the Lords Lieutenant that women might with advantage be associated with the Local Emergency Committees in certain classes of work.

In Lancashire a deputation received by Lord Shuttleworth put before him the desirability of the co-operation of women in schemes for safeguarding the civil population. As a result a committee of women was appointed to confer with the Chief Constable.

### WAR SERVICE FOR WOMEN.

MRS. SIDNEY WEBB presided at a meeting on "War Service for Women," of the Fabian Society (Women's Group) on April 27th. Many new occupations were now being given to women, Mrs. Webb said, and the great danger was that these openings were being given under very unsatisfactory conditions. Unfortunately, the trades which were now beginning to employ women were not the better class professions; these were being strictly guarded by the men. Another great danger was the probability of giving the women workers only the mechanical part to do, as for example in the post office where there was a great tendency to give to the women clerks merely the routine work and to keep the more responsible work for the men.

MR. J. J. MALLON (Anti-Sweating League) said that there was now quite an exceptional chance of doing permanent good for the working women. It was a matter of course if they did not make the most of the opportunity. Mr. Mallon said that naturally everybody agreed that, in the cases where the soldiers returned to their work after the war, they should go back to their former employment. Some men, however, would not come back and the women could fill their places; for this they would want, more than ever before, women with increased capacity and increased industrial ability, and for these things training was essential.

The point of training and trade schools was brought forward and very strongly urged by MRS. PEMBER REEVES (Fabian Women's Group).

### WOMEN AND PEACE.

A meeting of the Church League for Women's Suffrage was held at Caxton Hall on April 22nd on "Women and Peace," Mrs. Strickland presiding.

Mrs. SWANWICK pointed out that the war had made people think more deeply than before of the basis of the demand for the vote; they were realising now that they were not merely asking for a little weapon, a tool by which they might get some things they thought good—it was the symbol of a complete change of the basis of government. War time gave them the supreme opportunity for making people see the root of their demand. War time was also pre-eminently

the time for peace education. In peace time the great mass of men and women were drugged and lulled by secret diplomacy. They thought that if Sir Edward Grey simply desired peace he was strong enough to maintain peace, and they did not trouble about these matters. Now, however, they were at last asking themselves whether they had any right to say that these things were somebody else's business. But it was not right to leave everything to one man and then, at the critical moment, to repudiate that man. One had to go further back than that and upon them lay the responsibility of the war, and also the responsibility of seeing that these things shall not happen again.

MISS MAUDE ROYDEN said that those who regarded the Suffrage as something apart from peace had not understood the nobler meaning of the vote.

The military system destroyed the respect in which women should be held. History had shown that militarism when it is triumphant can only destroy. Women did not greatly count in war time; the ultimate appeal must always be to the fighter. Under militarism women counted only as breeders of soldiers.

### THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

In answer to many current criticisms the Executive of the English Committee of the International Women's Congress has issued the following statement:—

"It is desirable to clear up certain misconceptions which have arisen in relation to the Women's International Congress to be held at the Hague this week. The Congress was called by the Dutch women, and will take place in any case whether or no the British contingent arrives. The newspapers have frequently called the Congress a 'Peace Congress,' and the title has given rise to much misapprehension, since the resolutions show that it is not the intention of those promoting it to call for peace at the moment, or to discuss in detail the terms of the peace which is to end the war—a task obviously beyond their power—still less to raise a 'Peace at any price' cry. On the contrary, discussion on the national responsibility for, or conduct of, the present war, will be ruled out of order. The members of the Congress will find a common basis for discussion in considering the principles on which a permanent peace may be built after the war is over, and the part which it can play in securing support for them, and the determination that some means other than war must be found for settling international disputes in future."

"On the original programme drafted by the preliminary Committee, which met in Holland in February, one resolution called for a truce in order that the belligerent countries might define the terms on which they would be willing to make peace, but it is quite likely that this resolution will be ruled out of order as contrary to the rule of debate referred to above. All the other resolutions deal with such matters as the substitution of arbitration and conciliation for the settlement of disputes by arms, the education of children in peace principles, the right of women to share in the councils of the nations since war affects them so profusely, the promotion of goodwill between nations, and the democratic control of foreign policy."

### THE CONFERENCE ON WAR BABIES.

A Conference on the increase of illegitimate births near military centres, which met by the invitation of the Women's Imperial Health Association on April 22nd, was attended by some sixty representatives of different Women's organisations. The N.U.W.S.S. was represented by Mrs. Auerbach.

The following resolutions were passed:—

(1) That a Committee fully representative of all the voluntary societies and associations, more particularly those interested in the welfare of women and infants, be appointed to consider how best to investigate and deal with the various problems in connection with illegitimate births arising out of the present war crisis.

Proposed by Muriel Viscountess Helmsley.

Seconded by Dr. Florence Willey.

(2) That this Committee should form the nucleus of a General Council with power to co-opt, and later the General Council should appoint a small executive Committee.

Proposed by Mrs. Arthur Thesiger.

Seconded by Mrs. Percy Bigland.

(3) In view of the importance of safe-guarding the health of unmarried mothers and their children, it is essential that in any scheme put forward to help them, provision should be made (a) for the co-operation of Public Health Authorities which are now undertaking the care of mothers and infants before and after childbirth, and (b) for the representation of working women on any Committees entrusted with the work.

Proposed by Miss Llewellyn Davies.

Seconded by Mrs. Barton.

(4) This Conference is of opinion that it is in the highest interest of the State that the bond of mutual affection and responsibility between mother and child should be preserved.

Proposed by Mrs. Deane Streetfield.

Seconded by Mrs. Whitting.

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## Correspondence.

*A large amount of correspondence is unavoidably held over. It is necessary to remind our readers that there is no editorial responsibility for opinions expressed in the correspondence columns.*

### MRS. FAWCETT AND THE CONGRESS.

MADAM,—The retiring members of the Executive criticised by Mrs. Fawcett in her address to the National Union will doubtless reply for themselves. I write as a member of the February Council, who had the honour of moving the resolution in favour of an international congress, over the interpretation of which the differences on the Executive have arisen.

To us of the rank and file the decision of the Executive was sufficiently amazing: Mrs. Fawcett's arguments in defence of that decision are more amazing still. Every one of them was advanced in opposition to the Council resolution itself by Mrs. Fawcett and others. It was stated at the Council that such a conference at such a time—while the war was still in progress—was "likely to be the reverse of conducive to the cause of peace," and would "probably be injurious in its effects on the N.U.," and that "this is not the time to agitate in regard to the terms of peace." The Council listened patiently to all these arguments, and—passed the resolution! Not only so, but it emphasised its rejection of Mrs. Fawcett's contentions, (a) by rejecting a vote of censure on the Executive for proposing such a conference, and (b) by rejecting an amendment postponing the conference till after the war.

How has the situation changed since this decision? The resolution asked for a congress to be convened by the International Suffrage Alliance. The International Suffrage Alliance has refused to convene a congress, and the task has been taken up by a new international committee convened from Holland. Opponents of the proposal are entitled to show if they can that this change is so vital as to make the arguments on which an I.S.A. conference was approved no longer applicable (and that cannot be done by merely canvassing the attitude of individual members of the Executive). The only general argument advanced by Mrs. Fawcett on these lines is based on the assertion that "This Congress, whatever it may be called, is virtually a Peace Congress," since "all the chief resolutions bear on peace." This is only true in the same sense as many of the resolutions passed by the N.U. Council (some of them unanimously) "bear on peace." Could Mrs. Fawcett have prevented the submission of resolutions bearing on peace to an I.S.A. congress? Of course not; Mrs. Fawcett would have used her great influence to secure a modification of any resolutions she disapproved of, just as the British committee is using its influence to modify some of the resolutions to be submitted to next week's Conference at The Hague.

No; Mrs. Fawcett's whole argument is that any international conference of women at this time to consider the foundations on which a lasting peace can be built up is inopportune. The N.U. Council has come to the exactly opposite conclusion from exactly the same premises. Yet Mrs. Fawcett frankly tells us that her desire has been "concentrated on preventing the National Union from being officially connected with the Congress." By what right? Scarcely by right of that very leadership which was conferred for the execution of the Council's will!

A society established to proclaim and defend the principles of democracy cannot allow its express decisions to be reversed by either Executive or President. Mrs. Fawcett has evoked in the past our passionate devotion and loyalty by the steadfastness of her defence of these principles. Will she not add one more claim to our devotion by securing that the Council shall be invited to decide for itself whether or not its recent decisions have been correctly interpreted, and to elect an executive in accordance with its views?

GEO. G. ARMSTRONG.

### SUFFICIENT CAUSE.

MADAM,—Mrs. Fawcett's article in your last issue repeats a misunderstanding which has been often corrected. She quotes my article in *Jus Suffragii*, in which I wrote that the three Hon. Secretaries and the Editor of *THE COMMON CAUSE* resigned because they "desire to take a more active part in promoting what they consider the right sort of peace settlement," and she proceeds to argue as if that more active part involved a stop-the-war campaign now. (I can only suppose that this is what she means by saying that the International Congress, "whatever it may be called, is virtually a Peace Congress.") Miss Courtney and Miss Marshall have repeatedly corrected Mrs. Fawcett's version of their reasons for resigning; they withdrew from their offices not because they disagreed with the resolutions of the Council, but because the Council deliberately decided not to work for one of its most important declarations (the resolution endorsing Mr. Asquith's Dublin speech). They decided later on that they could not even sit on the Executive Committee, because they believed the Executive was misinterpreting the Council in hampering the work of the Press department, and in refusing to allow the Union to take part in the International Congress and in the Women's Conference held in London on April 14th. They do not wish, nor did either of the conferences wish to conduct a stop-the-war campaign at present. This is a misrepresentation which ought not to be repeated by any of our late colleagues.

Nor is it fair to suggest that any of us are less concerned about Belgium than Mrs. Fawcett herself. Miss Marshall has well expressed the difference in our attitudes by asking us to think whether we are really considering "the redemption of Belgium or the avenging of Belgium." In that wonderful Socialist Congress at Berne, Miss Bondfield tells us it was German women who drafted the resolution, placing blame on Germany for the invasion of Belgium, and demanding reparation. Some of us think that it would help on good feeling if British women clasped the hands of these brave German women, who are running the risk of being called traitors to the country they love, because they want that country to do what is right. Some of us think that a true concern for Belgium first might make us willing to consider whether there is no way by which we might cease to fight out our quarrels on her innocent soil.

Mrs. Fawcett thinks that we twelve resigned with no "sufficient cause." But she appeals for unity within the National Union, and it is in the interests of that unity that I, for one, resigned. A divided Executive is

an inefficient and vacillating instrument. The societies must make up their minds where they want to go, and choose leaders who will take them in that direction. An Executive is not like the House of Commons, with an Opposition whose function it is to oppose. The views of the two sections in the Executive were irreconcilable; one wished to work actively for the abolition of militarism as the arch-enemy of women's enfranchisement, the other was content merely to pass resolutions about it. Mrs. Fawcett knows this, and her suggestion amounts to this, that the active ones should have remained on the Executive, but have taken their pacifist activity outside. This is not really practicable, and it is possible for Mrs. Fawcett to think it is only because, until lately, most of us have not taken a very prominent part in the propaganda she has characterised as "almost treachery." Some of us have found it very hard to bear association with views expressed by Mrs. Fawcett on National Union platforms and in *Jus Suffragii*; the Council, indeed, emphatically asserted its internationalism as against the antagonistic nationalism which she had asserted in *Jus*. She would probably find it increasingly hard to bear with us if we remained her colleagues on the Executive. Now we are off, she will be able to lead the Union consistently in her direction, and we can be free to go in ours.

I note that Mrs. Fawcett appeals to members of the N.U. to "confine their energies" (with the exception of educational courses recommended by the Council) to the same work as it was doing "between August, 1914, and February, 1915." That is to say, she sets aside all but one resolution passed at the last Council.

I think that the National Union is losing its greatest opportunity. I cannot think that the great gifts of Miss Courtney and Miss Marshall would be suitably expended, in relief works or in a kind of educational campaign better adapted to the W.E.A. It is their special genius to organise and express political opinion which shall lead to the real enfranchisement of women, and I am glad to see this genius liberated. I want to have done with the militancy of men as well as of women, and for the same reasons—a Suffragist's reasons.

H. M. SWANWICK.

### A SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING.

MADAM,—Yesterday the Committee of the Darlington Society passed a resolution calling upon the Executive to arrange a *Special Council Meeting* in order to discuss the present serious situation in the N.U.W.S.S. They think this the only way in which a satisfactory conclusion can be arrived at, and hope that other Societies will take a similar step.

There is evidently much confusion of thought as to what interpretations may be put upon the resolutions carried at the Annual Council Meeting, and many of us are not satisfied with those arrived at by the Executive, which has caused the resignation of so many valuable members.

A. BURTT WOODHEAD (Hon. Sec.)

### THE HAGUE CONGRESS.

Mrs. Adèle Spon writes:—

MADAM,—I was very glad to see in your last issue Mrs. Fawcett's appeal to members of the National Union, to confine their energies when working through the Union, to those activities on which we all agree. Many of us feel that, at the present time, the attendance of British delegates at a Peace Conference is likely to have mischievous results.

Even a cursory perusal of German newspapers is sufficient to show how they are relying on a peace party in this country to save them from the consequences of their aggression—an aggression, moreover, which has been backed up and approved of by the whole German nation for the last quarter of a century, as anyone who has read German literature, even superficially, is forced to admit—and help them to obtain peace on their own terms. German agents have made (and are still making) all sorts of invidious attempts to sow distrust among the Allies, and if they can utilise the utterances of British delegates at this Conference in their campaign of misrepresentation, they will not fail to do so.

One proposal that is to come before the Congress runs as follows:—

"Since the people in each of the countries now at war believe themselves to be fighting, not as aggressors, but in self-defence and for their national existence, this International Congress of women urges the Governments of the belligerent countries to open negotiations at the earliest possible moment, and to refuse no proposal to do so: and, if necessary for this purpose, to call a truce."

The present moment, when for the first time on the Western Front the Allies are in a numerical superiority, is a peculiarly inappropriate one for British women to press for the opening of negotiations. The preamble to the resolution also does not fit the facts of the case. Truthfully worded, it should run something like this:—

"Since the people in Germany, who acclaimed and approved of a war of aggression, now find themselves faced with the possibility of being forced to fight in self-defence, and for their national existence—"

Such a suggestion as the one proposed, made by a Congress which has no claim to represent the general opinion of the women of any of the combatant countries, can, of course, carry not the slightest weight with any of the Governments concerned. But if, unhappily, the general public among our Allies should be led to believe that the Congress is really representative of the opinion of the majority of Englishwomen, it will be deeply and bitterly resented by them. It will also be resented by our own men at the Front, who have fought so heroically for our protection against superior numbers, and who are now eagerly waiting for the word to advance. The leaflet issued by the "British Committee" of the Congress states that "there is no proposal on the Congress agenda for a 'peace-at-any-price' propaganda." But what sort of peace do the Committee think they are likely to obtain while the enemy still holds Belgium and a considerable part of France? How should we British women feel if England, Scotland, Wales, or Ireland were invaded, and French and Belgian women went to a Congress and talked about opening negotiations for peace? Have the well-intentioned ladies of the British Committee no imagination, or are they so cosmopolitan as to esteem patriotism a sin?

MADAM,—May I ask for a little space in your valuable paper to point out that though much has been said and written as to the un-

suitability of the present time for the holding of this Congress on questions of peace and war, that there are some evils which cry so loudly for redress that their voice *will* make itself heard in season and out of season. Many women who have felt deeply on this point checked the utterance of their sorrow till this call to express it came from Holland. In replying to it they realised how grateful they were that at last some voice had been raised in protest against such appalling world-wide destruction of all they had been striving to accomplish for the world's betterment in years of devoted labour.

Probably if the first resolution, asking for a truce, had been omitted from the list submitted for consideration, thousands of those who have withheld their support from the Congress would have wholeheartedly bestowed it. Many of those selected by the Government to attend the Congress were travelling there with the fixed purpose of modifying this resolution which urged the granting of a truce, and so of ensuring that the resolutions would be issued to the world in such a form that they embodied a great and noble truth, and would be a landmark for future discussions on the best means of ensuring that such a disastrous means of settling international disputes should not be taken in future years, and that even matters which concerned the vital interests of many nations should not be decided by mortal conflict involving such terrible and universal loss and havoc.

Although, according to one correspondent last week, many French women do not feel they can at the present time support the aims of the Congress, there are others who have expressed themselves as most cordially at one with us, and who have even gone further and voiced the surprise and sorrow they, in common with many English working women, have felt, in past months, when no voice was raised by the women of England against the cruel war which was causing such misery throughout the world. The desire was not so much that the present war should be stopped, this being obviously impossible, as that such a strong and united protest should be made by the women of all nations that in future war should not be the means chosen whereby international disputes should be settled.

Were all women united in this desire, surely their voice would make itself heard so that such a barbarous manner of settling disputes should give way in favour of some form more rational, and not only rational but in accordance with those principles of love and forbearance which ought to be the characteristic of those who profess to be followers, however humbly, of Jesus Christ.

A MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS.

#### THE OBJECT OF THE N.U.

MADAM,—It has been our pride that the N.U. could find room for people of the most divergent opinions, all of whom were ready to subordinate their individual views on other subjects to the one great cause of Women's Suffrage. The moment any other cause—however overwhelmingly important—is substituted for Suffrage the divergencies are bound to cause disintegration. We may desire the weapon of the vote in order to attack militarism, or the white-slave traffic, or drink, or any other horrible evil—to different members of the N.U., different evils seem the most important; but as soon as we cease to concentrate on grasping the weapon, we begin to wrangle as to what we shall do with it *when we have it*. We have not got it yet. Let us by all means form or join societies of any kind we think desirable as a means of showing our views on any given subject, but let us remember that the object of the N.U. is not to demonstrate women's views about war, but to obtain the Parliamentary Franchise for women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men.

G. E. HADOW.

[We must remind Miss Hadow that the last Council Meeting recorded its belief that "the Woman's Suffrage movement is based on the principle that social relations should be governed not by physical force but by recognition of mutual rights." The cause of future peace, therefore, according to the Council, is not "substituted for Suffrage," but is the basis of the Woman's Suffrage movement.—ED., C.C.]

#### WAR BABIES.

MADAM,—May I urge readers of THE COMMON CAUSE to accept no general statements which are made as to the number of "War Babies" that are to be expected during the next few months without the most careful investigation? It is indeed our duty to watch out most carefully, and make what inquiries we can in our own neighbourhoods so as to be ready for any developments which may occur, but there is no doubt that many of the "hundreds here" and "thousands there," so glibly quoted, have melted away when inquiries were pressed home.

I should also like to urge that, in any special arrangements which have to be made, consideration should be given to *all first cases*, and efforts made to prevent any of these from having to enter the workhouse. This can often best be done by supporting existing institutions which deal with these cases.

C. D. RACKHAM.

#### THE HAGUE CONGRESS.

The Countess of Aberdeen, President of the International Council of Women, in a letter to Miss Janes, calling attention to the movement for the study of International Relations, states her views, as follows, with regard to Women's International Conferences:—

"I believe that International Conferences and Congresses on subjects connected with the war are for the present premature, and might even be the means of retarding the causes which we have most at heart. I am, therefore, on this ground, personally declining the courteous invitation which has been extended to me by the Committee of the International Congress of Women, which is convened at The Hague in April, and I am advising my I.C.W. fellow officers to take the same course. It will be remembered that, after much consideration, it was decided, at the Executive held at The Hague, that the International Council of Women would appoint no delegates to attend the meetings of other International organisations."



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The N.U.W.S.S. is an association of over 52,000 men and  
women who have banded themselves together, under the leadership  
of Mrs. Henry Fawcett, for the purpose of obtaining the Parlia-  
mentary vote for women on the same terms as it is or may  
be granted to men. At this great national crisis, however, they  
have for the time suspended their ordinary political activities, in  
order to put themselves and their Union at the service of those  
who are organising the relief of distress caused by the war.

**Morals and Militarism.**

Among the rumours which have at intervals convulsed us  
all since the outbreak of the war, a very persistent one has been  
that a large number of illegitimate births would follow on the  
abnormal conditions surrounding our great camps. "War-  
babies," as they are called in popular journalism, have been  
much and excitedly discussed, and all sorts of strange proposals  
made for their welfare. Mr. Ronald M'Neil argues in the  
*Observer* of April 18th that "we may have to throw over  
principles that we should otherwise hold," and that the laws  
of bastardy should be "drastically reformed, even if only  
temporarily." Other writers argue that, at this time, the one  
thing needful is to maintain and to increase the population, the  
implication being that to bear children, under whatever circum-  
stances, is the duty of every woman.

We have to remember, in dealing with this question, that  
the whole problem of sex morality—including the institution of  
marriage—is, for many perfectly moral people, in the melting-  
pot. The old idea of property in marriage—the property rights  
of the husband over his wife—is rejected with disgust by modern  
men and women; and the fact that they still exist in English  
law has discredited legal marriage in the eyes of many to whom  
the ideals of permanent monogamous union are absolutely  
sacred.

There is, moreover, a growing sense in the public mind both  
of social responsibility and of the value of human life. The  
knowledge that bad social conditions, too carelessly accepted by  
most of us, are the cause of much that is wrong in the individual  
has brought with it a more merciful attitude to the unmarried  
mother. We know that loneliness, economic pressure, the  
impossibility of early marriage is responsible for much: we  
realise that not the individual only but our social system is to  
blame. The recent demand, successfully made, that the  
unmarried mother shall receive maternity benefit under the  
Insurance Act was made under a deepened sense of social  
responsibility both towards the mother and her child; and the  
more recent decisions with regard to the unmarried wives of  
soldiers and sailors followed the same humane impulse.

It is natural, therefore, that Suffragists (who have had a  
large share in this humanising of public opinion) should turn  
to consider the problem of the "war-babies" with the liveliest  
sense of our common responsibility for war conditions, and an  
earnest desire to save them from the least disadvantage of all  
that have been attached by law and public opinion to  
"illegitimacy." But we must be as careful not to hurry from  
the humane to the sentimental, and it is towards the most  
deplorable kind of sentimentality that public opinion seems to  
be rushing now. "There may be illegitimate children," said  
a great French speaker dwelling on the sacredness of mother-  
hood: "there are no illegitimate mothers." Surely a senti-  
mental piece of rhetoric. Let us have the courage and the  
honesty to reverse it. There are no illegitimate children, and  
no child should bear the stigma of a guilt that is not his. Let us  
give such a child the maintenance, the care, the respect, that is  
his right. We can never give to him all that belongs to his  
happier brother. It is for this reason that we say boldly—there  
is illegitimate motherhood.

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It should be the child of a faithful love. Its coming should be earnestly desired, looked forward to with joy, received with reverence. Man does not live by bread alone, and all that the State can do for the illegitimate child will not make up to him if the rest is lacking. And therefore a woman or a man who becomes responsible for the birth of a child, from a passing emotion and evanescent passion, from a moment of loneliness or a sudden temptation, is an illegitimate mother—an illegitimate father. Let us remember all our own responsibility, and avoid cruelty as the worst of sins: but let us not speak as though to bring a child into the world in any but the best conditions we can create, is anything but frivolous and cruel.

It is, of course, sufficiently obvious why illegitimate parenthood is suddenly glorified. Indeed those who write of it say frankly that children ("boys at least" one says) are "badly needed." The awful loss of life caused by the war must somehow be made good. How else shall we fill our factories, our workshops and mills? Let us have babies anyhow, and hope they may be boys. And if our laws of illegitimacy create any difficulties, let them be "drastically amended, *even if only for a time*" (the italics are ours). The question is not of their justice or injustice, but only of their effect on our need for a rapidly increasing population. The one thing for which everything else must be sacrificed, is a rise in the birth-rate. We have been spared, in this country, some of the more obvious temptations of militarism; but that one most dangerous to women—the tendency to regard them merely as potential mothers of men, is already with us. Such was the sole function of women in the militarist France of Napoleon, and such, to a very great extent, the position of German women now. But rarely, perhaps, has this gospel been preached so openly in our country as to-day. The physical fact of motherhood becomes all-important, and all that it should mean is lost sight of. The old cruelty of public opinion towards the unmarried mother is forgotten, and a new cruelty towards her child creeps in. For it is a real cruelty—based on a real irreverence—to preach that children must be born—anyhow, merely for our convenience, to fill up the cogs of our social and industrial machinery. The girls who have been hanging round our camps have, as a matter of common knowledge, often been very young. Girls of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen, have, we are told, "been the worst." Such girls are neither mentally, morally, nor spiritually equipped for motherhood. They bear children at peril not only to themselves but to the next generation.

We are informed that printed slips urging men "to forego no opportunity of paternity" are being widely distributed in this country. The consequences to the women and to the children are disregarded with a levity which is as cruel as levity always is. We protest with all our strength against this abominable advice. The nations have gone to war. They have disregarded and jeered at the work of pacifists. They have devoted their genius, their revenues, and the lives of their citizens, to the manufacture of instruments to destroy life, and they have given nothing—relatively it is nothing—to the pursuance of less frightful methods of deciding international disputes. Now the end has come, and we have what we have worked for—destruction. Let us bear the anguish and repair the breaches with what fortitude we may: but let us not consent to the reckless lowering of the moral standard involved in the advice—"forego no opportunity of paternity"; in the brutal disregard of the rights of the unborn; in the reduction of women to the status of mere breeders of the race.

A. M. ROYDEN.

## The Workhouse as Maternity Hospital.

### Some Facts and Figures.

It has always been woman's province to save life—in the home, the school, the hospital, and on the battlefield; and from every woman's platform has come the demand of women to control the conditions of life in the home and out in the world. At the present time, all the most important women's organisations are occupying themselves with the problem of War Babies and their Mothers, and many different proposals are being put forward. In considering these it will be helpful to examine statistics concerning illegitimate infants in normal times.

In 1911 (*Daily Mail Year Book*, 1914) there were 37,633 illegitimate children born, and if there is absolutely no increase in these numbers in this year of stress and sorrow, the figures for their mortality are grave enough to merit some very straight thinking.

### WORKHOUSE BABIES.

The Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, 1909, Part I., gives some valuable information with regard to illegitimate deaths in workhouses, where a certain section of the public at the present time believes conditions are quite adequate, desirous as they are of patriotically saving as many "war babies" as possible. From available statistics the Commissioner gathered that:—

"In 1906 the number of births in Poor Law institutions of the United Kingdom exceeded 15,000, and out of 11,000 children born in 450 of the 645 Unions (England and Wales), 30 per cent. are described as legitimate and 70 per cent. illegitimate, amounting to 18 per cent. of all illegitimate births.

"The infants who are particularly likely to die are the illegitimates, and it is difficult to trace them after leaving the institution. The result is that many of the illegitimate babies are dead within a few weeks.

"Dr. Fuller, medical inspector to the Local Government Board for Poor Law purposes, came to the conclusion that out of 3,719 infants under two years of age in 546 workhouses, the average deaths during five years was 1,315, *i.e.*, more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  the average infant population in the institutions."

The following figures are instructive (1906):—

| Age at Death.    | Workhouse Population. |               | General Population.    |  |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|--|
|                  | Legitimate.           | Illegitimate. | per 1,000 babies born. |  |
| Put under 1 week | 40                    | 45            | 25                     |  |
| Put under 1 year | 268                   | 392           | 132                    |  |

"*i.e.*, the mortality of infants in Poor Law institutions where all dangers of inadequate medical attendance, nursing, lack of food and warmth, parental neglect are missing, is between two and three times as great in the workhouse as outside." (The figures for "under one year" are obtained by assuming that the babies who left the workhouse soon after birth die at the same rate as those who remain inside to the end of the short year of life.)

And what of the Damage Rate? A high medical expert writes:—

"The infantile mortality question is of extreme importance. While thousands perish outright, hundreds of thousands who worry through are injured, and grow up weaklings, physical and mental degenerates.

"A high infantile mortality rate denotes a far higher infantile deterioration rate, and this unwelcome fact must not be lost sight of."

And Dr. A. K. Chalmers:—

"The dead baby is next-of-kin to the deceased baby, who in turn becomes the anaemic, ill-fed, and educationally backward child—the unemployable casual."

Dr. Newsholme in his reports to the Local Government Board, 1913-14, writes:—

"Nearly all the deaths in the first week, and most of the deaths in the first month, are attributable to ante-natal and natal conditions—largely avoidable."

### STILL-BIRTHS.

Under the Notification of Births Act, 1907, not only live births but dead births occurring after the 28th week of pregnancy have to be notified wherever this adoptive Act is in force, and Dr. Newsholme (p. xxviii.) writes:—

"It is clear that a large and variable proportion of dead births remain unnotified. In the practice of midwives dead births amount to about 3 per cent. of all births attended by them. Dr. Routh estimates from consideration of a large number of cases that abortions at an earlier period of pregnancy are four times the number of dead births.

"This would imply a total ante-natal mortality of 150 per 1,000 births, *i.e.*, 120,000, which is higher than the total mortality in the first year after birth."

Dr. Newsholme continues (p. ciii.):—

"From evidence published by the Royal Commission on venereal diseases, it appears likely that half of this ante-natal mortality is ascribable to syphilis."

Dr. Johnstone (in his Special Report to the Local Government Board, August, 1913, on "Venereal Diseases") reports the venereal wards of the Poor Law Infirmary which he visited as being generally well kept and well administered, but the accommodation provided for venereal cases in the workhouses visited by him as a rule was not well adapted to the treatment which these cases require.

With regard to ophthalmia of the newborn which is responsible for much blindness (30 per cent.—78 per cent. of all blindness are figures given for England and other countries), Dr. Newsholme's report is equally interesting (p. cvi.). Notification of this disease is now compulsory since February, 1914, but many local authorities adopted the notification from 1910 onwards.

For 1913 in 215 districts representing nearly 11½ millions population and 295,000 births, 1,913 cases were notified (Cf. London in 1914, 884 notifications). He continues:—

"The prevention of the disease is best secured by the prevention of gonorrhœa, or, failing this, its discovery and treatment before parturition." Comment is needless.

### WAR BABIES.

If the military doctors have done their duty towards the troops under their care, the "war babies" should be

healthier than illegitimate children in general, just because their fathers have been living with a higher standard of health and hygiene, whilst under military discipline and medical control.

In the *Morning Post* on Wednesday, April 21st, Lady Gwendolen Cecil recommends the workhouse for our "war babies" where she believes adequate provision already exists for them. She at least is not torn between a desire to save the babies for our crippled nation, and a fear that life may be made too easy for the mother, though "the life of a girl left alone with a baby and a heartache can't be very easy." It has been left to two men to write: "The women are no more blameworthy than the men."

Is Lady Gwendolen Cecil content to let any words of hers support the saying that "woman's worst enemy is woman"? She might with advantage read the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission on "The Workhouse as Maternity Hospital." That this is unknown to her, is the only charitable construction to put upon her letter.

BARBARA TCHAYKOVSKY, M.D.

(To be continued in a subsequent article, "How to Save the War Babies.")

## Wanted—More Medical Women.

I was seated in a corner of a railway carriage the other day, on my way to town, and opposite me were two elderly gentlemen talking earnestly. Presently, one raised his voice and I heard this sentence:—"The people who have done the most good in China have been the lady doctors, but we want more of them."

"We want more of them," that is being echoed all over England to-day, for prejudice and jealousy have been swept aside: the medical woman has come into her own in amazing fashion, and young women considering a professional career are urged to become doctors. Before deciding such a momentous question, however, the intending student would like to have some idea as to whether she would make a good doctor. Then come questions as to the cost, the time it takes to train, and most important, the prospects after qualification. Briefly, in this article, I propose to give some definite information on these points.

As to the personal qualifications in order that a woman may become a successful practitioner, the Warden of the London School of Medicine says—"Good health, common sense, and hard work are essential. The training will develop tact, sympathy, and knowledge of human nature."

With these qualities and a genuine desire to be a doctor (it is fatal to choose a profession because someone advises it) the next question may be faced—that of cost. It is considered that from £120 to £140 a year is sufficient for a student at The London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women, this sum including board, lodging, and all necessary fees and expenses. With care a student can manage on a little less at the School in Edinburgh. The General Medical Council require that medical studies shall extend over a period of five years from the date of registration. This is an advantage, as only the efficient are likely to persevere through so lengthy a training: it also prevents overcrowding and tends to keep the standard of character high. The experience gained while working among the poor during two severe epidemics has convinced me that the personal character of a doctor counts enormously.

It is a proof of the great strides that have been made by women in this profession that there is to-day a choice of medical schools in which to train. The first and best known is The London (Royal Free Hospital) School of Medicine for Women, 8, Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, W.C. Founded by women for women at a time when the universities and medical schools refused them admittance, its history has been one of steady progress, and it has now been found necessary to enlarge its quarters. Here a student, if she has passed a preliminary arts examination, may enter as soon as she has passed her 16th birthday. A certain number, sixteen in all, can be housed at the School, there being nine sets of chambers, each set having one or two bedrooms and a sitting-room. College Hall, Byng Place, Gordon Square, also provides residence for thirty-five students of schools of the universities and a list of suitable boarding houses in the neighbourhood is kept by the Secretary. The Missionary Societies have learnt by experience the advantage of having medical women, and many of them give assistance to students on certain conditions. The School very generously makes a reduction in fees to students entering the School with grants in aid of training for Missionary Societies.

Those who consider co-education an advantage will be

interested in The Victoria University of Manchester, which receives men and women students for medical training. "Owens College" although originally founded for men, has admitted women for certain classes since 1874. When in 1903 the University was reconstructed under the title of The Victoria University of Manchester, it was enacted "that all degrees and courses of study shall be open to women": this includes the medical school. The class rooms, laboratories, and libraries are open to women, and there is a large common room for women students in the medical department. They must, however, be over seventeen years of age instead of sixteen as at the London School of Medicine. There is no accommodation for the residence of students within the Manchester University, but there are two licensed Halls, Ashbourne Hall, Fallowfield, where Miss Phoebe Sheavyn, D.Litt. (London), is Warden, and Langdale Hall, Church Hostel for Women Students, under the Wardenship of Miss Thyra B. Alleyne, D.Litt. (Durham). Both these Halls are within easy distance of the University.

After qualification, the student usually seeks a post in a hospital to gain further experience before settling down to private practice. This used to be a difficulty, so much so that women were practically forced to found hospitals of their own in order to obtain full opportunities for post-graduate training. Since the war this has been entirely changed, and the big hospitals are only too thankful to get fully qualified women; indeed, there is hardly a resident post not open to a qualified woman if she cares to apply for it. In connection with this an amusing incident occurred at a hospital committee meeting a few weeks ago. It was in a large provincial town, and the committee, all of them men, were worried; they had tried to obtain a resident house surgeon for a month and the post remained vacant. Finally, a member said in a resigned tone—"If it comes to the worst we shall have to ask for a woman."

"We have written to all the medical schools that have women students and have advertised for a fortnight for a lady doctor," replied the Secretary, "there is not one disengaged." At the present moment there is also a demand for women to act as locum tenens for doctors going to the front.

Just now the conditions are abnormal; the demand will not always be so much greater than the supply, but the general hospitals having opened their doors to women residents will never refuse them again merely on account of their sex. On certain lines it is probable that women will more than hold their own, for it is significant that the only hospital in England devoted to the treatment of early nervous cases, and the hospital at Manchester for babies under one year old, have been founded, and are officered by women. In general hospitals the post of resident is held for six months or a year, and the salary is from £120 with board and lodging. Some asylums, however, have permanent residents and such posts occasionally carry a pension.

In private practice women have always done well and are likely in the future to do still better. There is a great need for them in our large industrial towns: working women of all classes appreciate being attended in illness by one of their own sex. A well-known doctor addressing students at a medical school told them that the general practitioner must be prepared to face all emergencies with sound health, wisdom, patience, and all the virtues. But even with a few imperfections the medical woman will not have to wait long for an interesting practice and a comfortable income.

A. H. BENNETT.

## INQUIRY INTO THE "WAR BABY" PROBLEM.

The following announcement was issued on Monday, 26th, from Lambeth Palace:—

"The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Dr. Scott Lidgett, Adeline Duchess of Bedford, Dr. Mary Scharlieb, Lady Londonderry, Lady Edmund Talbot, and others have been giving careful consideration to the alleged probability that there will be during the war an increase in the number of illegitimate births, and they have requested a small committee of ladies, convened by Mrs. Creighton in consultation with the National Union of Women Workers, to investigate the nature and extent of the danger.

"They propose to invite a larger body to consider the report made by the investigators, and the special steps which, in conjunction with official bodies, should be taken, if it is shown that the problem is of serious dimensions. The Archbishop of York will be chairman of that larger body, and the names of those comprising it will shortly be communicated to the press."

## THE SUFFRAGE CLUB.

Dr. Barbara Tchaykovsky will speak on "War Babies and their Mothers" at the Suffrage Club, 3, York-street, St. James', on Tuesday, May 4th, at 8 p.m. Admission will be free: there will be a collection in aid of the International Suffrage Shop.

## Work of the London Society.

The London Society's office at 58, Victoria Street has been like a beehive of late. After Christmas there was indeed a slight lull, but during the last two months all sorts of unexpected openings for new kinds of usefulness have appeared.

### LONDON UNITS FOR SCOTTISH HOSPITALS.

First and foremost, as is well known, the Society has the firm resolve to raise two London Units of its own for the National Union Scottish Women's Hospitals and the idea is arousing enthusiasm not only among our own members but also among a large and increasing circle of new friends. The London headquarters for the Scottish Hospitals general purposes has also now been established in the office and has been working in close co-operation with the National Union headquarters and with Dr. Elsie Inglis herself. Special Committees of all kinds for the London work have been formed, and they also include not only members of our local and Executive Committees, but also many others too numerous to name, among them being Mrs. Philip Agnew, Mrs. Anstruther, Mrs. Percy Bigland, Lady Busk, Lady Brassey, Lady Cowdray, Miss Emily Davies, Lady Emmott, Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, Mrs. Mackintosh of Mackintosh, Lady Selborne, Lady Strachey, and Dr. Jane Walker. Miss Rosamond Smith is Hon. Secretary and Miss Kathleen Burke Hon. Organising Secretary, and they have efficient support in the office from Miss Hunter who has become Hon. Secretary of the Equipments Sub-Committee, while Miss Theresa Gosse, as representative for the passports department, carries out some curiously intricate and responsible duties with marvellous energy and skill. A large number of meetings to raise funds are in hand, and more and more are needed (readers please note!); speakers can always be provided, and the meetings may be large or small, public or private. Among the varying sums already raised at such meetings are £48, £39, £3, £8, £300, and £59. The latest of these to be arranged is a drawing-room meeting at 44, Finchley Road, at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, May 12th, when Mr. Maurice Hewlett is to be in the chair and that great authority on Serbia, Mr. Seton Watson (co-editor of "War and Democracy"), will tell us what he alone can tell of that country. Some invitations for this meeting may still be had at 58, Victoria Street.

The call of Serbia is insistent, volunteers to increase the staff, to form new Units, to take the places of those who have given their lives or their health flow in, we therefore must provide the money and at once—over £7,000 more for the London Society's responsibility in this matter is what is asked. Dr. Inglis has been working at the office for some days, early and late, and thoroughly approves all we are doing and attempting. But now an urgent telegram has come and at a day or two's notice she has herself left for Serbia to reinforce Dr. Soltan, who has fallen ill at her post, and this makes it more than ever important for us to be able to send out the news very shortly that our task is accomplished—two London Units to go to Serbia or to France and £10,000.

And not only Serbia but France also needs our help. Miss Strachey has gone to France for her holiday, and, writing from the South, she says: "It is impossible to escape from the war for one instant even down here"; while of her stay at Royau-mont she writes: "I lay on a straw mattress in a beautiful stone vaulted room in a distant corner of the building along strange passages, and up and down steps—the light came through a traceried window and all night I listened to the guns —" And she lifts the veil in regard to how those who are not skilled doctors or nurses also serve: "X spends her life in fumigating and darning and doctoring up filthy uniforms and garments of every sort. . . . I think of her spending her whole days in solitude in that attic chamber . . . !"

Yes, France with her 500 miles of battle-front wants our help, too.

If there are any who may still doubt that our London Units scheme in particular deserves every bit of support the generous will give it, be it known to them that its Vice-Presidents are Sir Alfred Keogh, the brilliant chief of the War Office Medical Service, Dr. Louisa Aldrich-Blake, and the Bishop of London.

### WAR SERVICE AT HOME.

To turn to those left at home. There is the Government War Service scheme, for, of course, we are one of the accredited societies for oiling its wheels! Two delegates attended the recent conference convened by the Workers' National Committee to consider how best to provide against this patriotic service depressing the normal conditions in the labour market, and the position of the ordinary working woman. The Society

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will make every effort to prevent such a disaster, by bringing before those who desire to sign on, this possibility, while at the same time offering them every encouragement to hold themselves in readiness for any demands the country may make upon them. The forms filled in make an interesting study—there is, alas! the underpaid girl at 7s. a week who wants "a change," there is the ardent aspirant towards wireless telegraphy or towards ticket collecting or lift attending or post office canteens, or ammunition making, or what not, while someone else, again, offers "Chinese, French, Esperanto, and a little German" as her share; and, lastly, there is the delightful French lady whose human document replies as follows to the inquiry: "Have you done professional work before?" "Yes, on the stage, and did jumping and tricks with horses at the Hippodrome." She wishes to do despatch riding or to drive horses, or mules anywhere in the country in France, and when asked: "Will you train, &c.," her rejoinder is convincing—"Do not want to be trained in anything; want to go in own capacity!" She seems quite efficient, and wears breeches and topboots, and finds London delightful, because no one fusses, and everyone takes her as they find her!

#### WOMEN'S SERVICE.

The new "War Service" idea does not make us forget our own Women's Voluntary Service, and we hereby make it known that efficient voluntary workers for many kinds of social work are still urgently wanted. Both in this department and in that of "War Service," Mrs. Anstruther is giving us every help and support.

#### BELGIUM AGAIN.

Least of all have we forgotten our first love, brave Belgium! Mr. Irving has lent us the Savoy Theatre for May 10th, and at 3.30 on that day M. Vandervelde, the Belgian Minister, and, it is said, the "greatest living orator," will tell the public of his great hopes for the future of Belgium. No one should miss this, and especially as the profits will be divided between the Women's Service Fund and the fund for supplying the many grievous needs of the Belgian soldiers now at the front.

#### STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND WAR.

Lastly, we do not forget that Suffragists have also responsibilities of yet another sort, and a series of six readings and discussions on the problems of war has been arranged to begin at 5.30 on Friday, May 7th. Tickets for the Course are only 3s. each, and include a copy of the text-book to be used, *War and Democracy*, so a large attendance is hoped for. The six subjects chosen are: Introductory: Foreign Policy and Causes of War; Our Allies; The States with which we are at War; The Issues of War; War, Science, and Philosophy; Ways of Preventing War in the Future. All the above are activities centreing to some extent round the office, but in all of them our local branches and members are co-operating, in addition to carrying on innumerable activities of their own, some account of which we shall hope to give very shortly.

A. H. W.

### THE SUFFRAGE CLUB, 3, York Street, St. James's Sq., S.W.

During the War, subscription reduced to **One Guinea** and no entrance fee.  
MEETINGS:—Monday, May 3rd, at 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. MICKVALE-MAYER (A. & N.).  
Tuesday, May 4th, 8 p.m. Miss MURIEL MATTERS (for Int. Suff. Shop). (Z.W.V. Assn.)  
Wednesday, May 5th, 3.30 p.m. Mrs. NEVINSON, W.F.L.  
Friday, May 7th, 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. DOUGLAS KNOCKER.  
The Tariff at this Club instead of rising with the War, is being lowered. Note the present 1/- lunch—Soup, Joint, two Vegetables, Bread, Sweet or Cheese. Test it as the **BEST SHILLING LUNCH IN LONDON.**

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### N.U.W.S.S. SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITAL.

#### SERBIA.

The outstanding event of the week has been the departure for Serbia of Dr. Elsie Inglis, who, with Miss S. E. S. Mair, originated the hospital scheme. It is to her bold conception of the great possibilities of the work, to her indomitable perseverance and triumphant energy in carrying it out, that the present achievements are mainly due. When the news came that the Chief Medical Officer (Dr. Soltau) of the hospital at Kraguievatz was smitten with diphtheria and that Dr. Inglis's presence was greatly wished for, she did not hesitate for a moment in responding to the call to active service at the front. With her have gone the good wishes of countless friends, to whom her personality has been an inspiring force. Miss Bowhill and the Hon. Mrs. Haverfield accompanied her as Matron and Orderly respectively for the Kraguievatz Hospital, and six additional nurses are on their way by sea, Dr. Inglis taking the quicker route by land. In Kraguievatz, at the end of March, there were 6,000 cases of illness, of which 1,000 were typhus. It is probable, however, that the disease is now somewhat on the decrease.

Dr. Soltau writes of a visit to the hospital of the Crown Prince of Serbia, who was very pleasant. She also describes a visit paid by herself and Dr. Chesney to Nish for a second conference on how best to cope with the fever epidemics in Serbia. Sir Ralph Paget, who has been appointed Special Commissioner for Hospitals by the British Government, was present, and the co-ordination of the work of the various hospitals and the effective distribution of their forces was discussed. The latest news, happily, reports an improvement in Dr. Soltau's condition.

The new Serbian Unit, under Dr. Alice Hutchison, sailed on an Admiralty transport on April 21st, forty-two persons in all, accompanied by six nurses bound for Kraguievatz. The destination of this second Serbian Unit is as yet uncertain, but it carries its house on its back, so to speak, in the shape of an ample supply of tents, the most sanitary and approved form of fever hospital. Further workers, including Miss Florence Jack, the Administrator, are to join Dr. Alice Hutchison by the next transport.

Unsparring help was given to the outgoing party at Cardiff by Miss Mabel Howell, Secretary of the Welsh Hospital Unit for Serbia, who did everything possible to aid the dispatch of the forty-eight people with their 1,171 bales of equipment.

#### FRANCE.

Dr. Louise McLroy and Dr. Laura Sandeman, who are to be in joint charge of the new French Unit, hope to go out to look after preparations at Troyes early in May. Their *personnel* will be housed in the delightfully situated Château Chanteloup, at Troyes, whilst the patients will be under canvas in the pleasant grounds. Their Bacteriological Laboratory will probably be in charge of Dr. Ellen Porter, and their Radiographer will be Miss Stoney. Preparations are being made for two hundred beds, and General de Torcy, of Troyes, expresses much satisfaction at the expected arrival of the Unit.

At the Abbaye de Royaumont there is hope of an interesting extension in the shape of a travelling X-ray apparatus and ambulance rest-station. The plans for this are under consideration, and will probably mature ere long. Charming letters of appreciation from ex-patients in the trenches have been received, and it is evident that Royaumont is regarded a most desirable haven.

#### CALAIS.

The enteric epidemic in Flanders being happily so much on the wane, the Scottish Women's work has come to an end there. Dr. Phillips and some of the Staff are rejoicing in the continuance of their association with Dr. Alice Hutchison, and have gone to Serbia with her, whilst some of the other nurses, by no means weary of foreign service, are going on to Troyes.

Gifts in kind as follows will be gratefully received by Dr. Elsie Inglis at 2, St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, or at 58, Victoria Street, London, S.W. They should be accompanied by the names and addresses of the donors.

#### CLOTHING, &C., REQUIRED FOR THE HOSPITALS.

Bed jackets, dressing gowns, bedroom slippers, pyjamas (flannel and cotton), day shirts (flannel and cotton), blankets (old and new), draw sheets, feather pillows, sheets, towels of all sorts, pillow cases, helpless case shirts, pants, vests, hot-water bottles (rubber), hot-water bottle covers.

[We regret that we are obliged to hold over till next week the interesting account of the Welsh Unit for Serbia, which it is hoped will soon be complete.]

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL UNION would be grateful for gifts (or loan) of tennis rackets, net, balls, netting, or shoes, to start a club for girls.—Address, Miss Driscoll, "Caerleon," Mount Pleasant, Chepstow, Mon.

**Memorial Hall, Manchester,** Monday, May 17th, at 7.30 p.m.  
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By **HOPE SQUIRE** and **FRANK MERRICK.**  
Tickets 5/- (reserved), 2/6 and 1/-, from Messrs. FORSYTH BROS., 126, Deansgate, and at the door.

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